

Piptatherum canadense

Status

Federal status: G5 N2, Not listed

NH state status: S1, Endangered

ME state status: S1?, Special Concern

Population trend information is lacking for this species. In New Hampshire and Maine a majority of occurrences are identified as historic, which could indicate a decline or just a lack of recent surveys.

The expert panel indicated a viability outcome of B-C range-wide due to rarity in all but center of range. They are uncertain of the WMNF outcome, but feel it is a B at best due to very limited distribution.

Distribution

Piptatherum canadensis occurs from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland west to Saskatchewan south to Minnesota, and east to Maine. Disjunct populations occur in Wyoming, West Virginia, and South Carolina.

In New Hampshire, this species is known from one extant occurrence in Chatham and three historic occurrences in Conway, Franconia, and Loudon. The Chatham occurrence is in the WMNF. In Maine, 4 extant and 9 historic occurrences are documented from Oxford, Washington, Knox, Hancock, Aroostook, and Lincoln Counties. The 3 historic Oxford County occurrences are from Rumsford, Fryeburg/Bridgton/Denmark area, and Andover. None were on the WMNF.

Habitat

On the WMNF, it occurs in rocky openings just below treeline and extends into the heath/krummholz zone a ways. In Maine, it occurs in dry, rocky or sandy soils in open ledge, barrens, and dry woods habitats, often at the edge between blueberry fields and forest. The SVE panel said its habitat in northern New England is variable, but mostly open, dry, and boreal, including early and mid-successional forests and woodlands. Several of the Maine occurrences in woods were from the edge of or within pine forest; for others, forest type was not identified. Dry, rocky or sandy forest is often oak or pine, but not always, so other forest types may be used. Disturbance or natural conditions that create and maintain openings would benefit this species.

Limiting Factors

Although it can occur in forest and woodland habitats, it needs a certain level of openness. Succession reduces habitat suitability and can limit populations.

The WMNF occurrence is adjacent to a trail and could be impacted by trampling and trail maintenance. The population was found recently so has not been monitored over enough time to determine if effects are occurring.

Viability concern

Automatically listed as a sensitive species on the WMNF due to N2 ranking. Potential for recreation use to impact only known extant population in New Hampshire also is a concern.

Management activities that might affect populations or viability

So little is known about the habitat requirements and limiting factors for this species that it is uncertain what management might affect it. It occurs in and at the edges of some woodlands. Timber harvest might improve suitability by opening the habitat and setting back succession, but direct impacts could occur if harvest occurred during the snow-free season. Road and trail construction could open canopy and possibly create habitat, but also could bring more people to a population and result in direct impacts.

References

MNAP. 2001. Biological Conservation Database queried for *Oryzopsis canadensis* on November 13, 2001.

NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2001. Version 1.6. Arlington, Virginia, USA: NatureServe. Available: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: January 20, 2004).

USFS. 2000. R9 RFSS Risk Evaluation Form for: *Oryzopsis canadensis*. White Mountain National Forest, Laconia, NH.